

## BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

DATE May 15, 1987

FULL NAME David MacDonald Rankin SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_  
(No initials if you can possibly get full name)  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY Adelphi STATE Maryland ZIP CODE 20783  
DATE OF BIRTH 10/ /58 (This is important and should be exact)  
APPROXIMATE AGE 28 (To be used ONLY when date of birth is not known)  
RELIGION Methodist NATIONALITY American  
OCCUPATION Manager, \_\_\_\_\_  
EDUCATION High School/ Some college (University of Maryland)  
WEIGHT 170-180 HEIGHT 6'0-6'1" RACE Caucasian  
COLOR OF HAIR Blonde, Sandy Brown COLOR OF EYES \_\_\_\_\_  
OUTSTANDING CHARACTERISTICS OR INTERESTS Hunting  
MARRIED OR SINGLE Single CHILDREN None  
(Number, ages, and names, if possible)  
NAME OF SPOUSE None

## SCOUTING CONNECTIONS:

UNIT #	CITY	STATE	POSITION	DATE REGISTERED	DATE RESIGNED
Troop 740	College Park	Maryland	SA, SM		

SPECIAL RECOGNITION Vigil Honor in the Order of the Arrow: Eagle Scout

SUSPENDED OR DENIED REGISTRATION FOR FOLLOWING REASONS:

SPECIFY THE FACTS WHICH LEAD YOU TO RECOMMEND DENIAL OF REGISTRATION AND LIST ATTACHED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (STATE ONLY KNOWN FACTS, NOT RUMOR, CONJECTURE OR SPECULATION):

CONFIDENTIAL

JUL 10 1987

F. STARON

RS-509

4/14/83-nah

NOTED

NOV 06 '87

JOSEPH L. ANGLIM

Signed Paul R. Davison  
SCOUT EXECUTIVECouncil National Capital Area

CONF013627

March 19, 1991

Mr. Ronnie L. Carroll  
Scout Executive  
National Capital Area Council, No. 82

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: DAVID M. RANKIN

Dear Ron:

A recent check of our Ineligible Volunteer File against the National Eagle Scout Association indicated that the above named individual is presently a member of NESA.

This individual is listed on our Ineligible Volunteer File and will not be permitted to register with the Boy Scouts of America. We wanted you to be aware of this, so that the individual cannot participate in any activities with the council, simply because he is a member of NESA. He should not participate in any leadership capacity or assume any responsibility in the Boy Scouts of America. He could participate as a parent if he has a son or daughter involved.

We wanted to make you aware of this, so you would not involve him. Let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Paul Ernst, Director  
Registration and Statistical Service

eko

cc: Charles D. Ball, Northeast Region,

READY FOR FILE  
MAR 18 1991  
ERIN O'RILEY

CONF013628





**National Capital Area Council  
Boy Scouts of America**

9190 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland 20814-3897 • 301 530-9360

February 11, 1988

Mr. Paul I. Ernst  
Director of Registration  
National Office, Boy Scouts of America  
1325 Walnut Hill Lane  
Irving, Texas 75038

Dear Paul:

The enclosed newspaper articles of February 9, 1988 from the Washington Post, the Montgomery Journal, and the Prince George's Journal are provided for the David M. Rankin file. The articles are self explanatory.

Sincerely,

Paul R. Davis, Jr.  
Scout Executive

PRD: jbp

Enclosure



United Way

Serving the Youth of Washington, D.C., and Seventeen Surrounding Counties of Maryland and Virginia

Member Agency of United Way of the National Capital Area

United Givers Fund: Frederickburg / Spotsylvania / Stafford • United Way of Frederick County, Inc. • United Way of Calvert County  
Dankgron United Givers Fund, Inc. • United Way of Culpeper, Inc. • Manne Corps Development and Education Command United Fund

CONF013630

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1988



David Rankin sits at defense table as attorney Joseph DePaul addresses judge.

By G. LINDON—THE WASHINGTON POST

## Ex-Md. Scoutmaster Gets 15 Years for Child Abuse

By Keith Harrison  
Washington Post Staff Writer

David MacDonald Rankin, a former College Park Boy Scout leader, was sentenced yesterday to 15 years in prison for what a Prince George's Circuit Court judge called the "absolutely incredible" crime of having members of his troop perform sex acts with him.

Rankin, 28, had pleaded guilty to 11 counts of child abuse, all of the charges stemming from his involvement with nine scouts whom Rankin had put through an initiation cer-

emony into a special group within his troop called "the Rowdies."

Reading from a prepared statement, Rankin asked judge G.R. Hovey Johnson to sentence him to a long probation with community service. "I never intended to harm anyone," Rankin said. "They were like sons and little brothers to me. If I could turn back the hands of time, I would."

But Johnson, himself a former Boy Scout, said probation would be inappropriate in the case and sentenced Rankin to 15 years for each

See SENTENCE, B2, Col. 3

# Md. Man Gets 15 Years for Child Abuse

SENTENCE, From B1

of 1 counts, with the sentences to run concurrently for a total prison term of 15 years.

"I honestly find this troubling case to be overwhelming," Johnson said, "and I find the offenses that were committed with these young boys absolutely incredible.

"It cries out for punishment," the judge continued. "It cries out for deterrence."

The case against Rankin, an Eagle Scout and an honorably discharged Marine, spurred the National Capital Area Council Boy Scouts of America to come up with a new plan to help prevent child abuse in scout units.

The Boy Scouts of America had already maintained a computerized reference system that lists more than 2,000 former Boy Scout leaders who have had problems ranging from alcoholism to inability to manage funds, but not all names make it into the system.

The plan, released Dec. 15, did not call for any new screening of Boy Scout volunteers. Instead, it emphasized adherence to the Scout Oath—"to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight"—and self-monitoring of behavior by scout leaders.

Rankin was arrested May 11, after the father of one of the victims notified officials of the National Capital Area Council.

About six months before that, said Assistant State's Attorney

Thomas McManus, the father arrived earlier than planned to pick up his son from a scout meeting and thought he saw Rankin playing with his son's genital area. The father waited before notifying officials, McManus said, because his son denied for several months that anything had happened.

Rankin had led Troop 740 for five years before his arrest last spring. Eight of the incidents occurred with scouts ages 14 to 16 during the weekly troop meetings at a hall adjacent to Holy Redeemer Catholic Church in College Park. Three other incidents occurred at an overnight camping trip with the troop in Charles County. All of them happened between early 1985 and February 1987.

Rankin "had a clear sense from the beginning that what he was doing was wrong," McManus said.

"Some of the victims can talk about it with openness and candor," McManus said. "They don't appear to be emotionally scarred, at least not on the surface. But others among the victims will be scarred for the rest of their lives."

A psychiatrist and a psychologist who have been counseling and treating Rankin since last summer concluded that Rankin suffered from a poor self-image and became involved in scouting "where he would be accepted and could excel," said Joseph DePaul, Rankin's attorney. The crimes were committed, according to DePaul's reading of the health professionals' evaluation of

Rankin, to bolster his self-esteem.

Judge Johnson said that Rankin violated the trust parents have in organizations such as the Boy Scouts to help shape their children.

"I can recall personally the influences that the scoutmaster had on me," he said. "To have that trust violated to the extent that you violated it cannot be condoned, cannot be explained away by a sense of low self-esteem."



Rankin, left, before Judge Johnson, who called the crime "absolutely incredible."

## THE Region

# Ex-Scout leader gets 15-year term for abusing boys

### UPPER MARLBORO

A former Boy Scout leader faces 15 years in prison for sexually abusing eight teen-age troop members in Prince George's and Charles counties.

Circuit Judge G.R. Hovey Johnson yesterday sentenced David McDonald Rankin to 15-year sentences for each of 11 counts of child abuse and specified that they should run concurrently, according to the Prince George's state's attorney's office.

Rankin, 29, was scoutmaster of Troop 740 of Holy Redeemer Catholic Church in College Park when he was taken into custody last May 11.

The arrest came six months after a father who had arrived early to pick up his son from a meeting saw Rankin fondling the boy, said Assistant State's Attorney Thomas McManus.

The son of the man who witnessed the abuse denied for several months that anything had happened, McManus said.

Rankin told the scouts the sex acts were part of initiation into a special group within the troop called "The Rowdies."

Rankin pleaded guilty in November to eight counts of child abuse in Prince George's County.

Page 6 Journal FEB 9, 1988

# Ex-Scout leader to do time

By LARRY PERL

Journal staff writer

Calling it a crime that "cries out for punishment," Circuit Court Judge G.R. Hovey Johnson sentenced a former Scoutmaster in College Park to 15 years in prison for sexually abusing 11 youths under his care.

"I was a Boy Scout," Judge Johnson told the former Scoutmaster, David MacDonald Rankin, during sentencing yesterday. "I find the offense that was committed against these boys to be absolutely incredible . . . It cries out for deterrent."

Rankin, 28, of Adelphi, apologized and asked the judge for "whatever leniency you see fit."

"I never intended to harm anyone," Rankin said. "I have repented."

His attorney, Joseph DePaul, asked for a sentence of probation with psychiatric counseling, arguing that Rankin has no prior criminal record, is "remorseful" and is being treated by two psychiatrists who cite improvement.

But Johnson said prosecutors were "extremely lenient" in accepting a plea bargain agreement under which Rankin would serve no more than 15 years in prison.

Rankin could have received a maximum 165 years without the agreement.

Assistant State's Attorney Thomas McManus said he accepted the agreement because of Rankin's clean record and immediate guilty pleas. McManus also dropped other charges against Rankin.

But he said Rankin "manipulated" his victims and "used their youthful desires and blossoming sexuality . . . for his own sexual gratification."

Rankin was indicted last June on 32 counts of sexual child abuse and other related sexual offenses in 12 separate incidents between September 1985 and April 1987 involving eight members of his Scout troop. Three additional sexual child abuse charges were added a week after the indictments.

According to police, Rankin admitted that he had been sexually involved with the Scouts.

Rankin, a former Boy Scout, had been active in his church and was honorably discharged from the Marines Corps after an injury.

Johnson said it was "extremely difficult" to decide upon a sentence because of Rankin's clean record. But he said Rankin committed crimes against young boys who are impressionable. "I can recall the influence that the Scoutmaster had on us," he said of his Boy Scout days.



...put to a vote by the 600 members of the Fairfax Education Association at a date yet to be determined, Dash said.

Union leadership will recommend it members approve the 1988-89 contract, but Dash would not predict whether it will pass because of the implementation of the proposed.

...comment on yesterday's agreement until he sends a memo to the School Board, but officials said its cost would be

See FAIRFAX, B2, Col. 6

...and to its potential for future development," the deans wrote in the two-page, confidential memo that one faculty member called "rather extraordinary."

Yesterday, the Campus Senate held an unusual forum, featuring a project what is one of the County Executive Parits Glendening, who teaches government and politics courses at the university. "We have to make sure not to harm the interests of College Park, which are at-

See UNIVERSITY, B5, Col. 2

# Former Scout Leader Pleads Guilty to 8 Counts of Child Abuse in Md.

By Keith Harrison  
Washington Post Staff Writer

David MacDonald Rankin, a former College Boy Scout leader, pleaded guilty yesterday in a Prince George's County court to eight counts of child abuse for having members of his troop perform sex acts with him.

Rankin, 28, who was scoutmaster of Troop 1 at Holy Redeemer Catholic Church for years until his arrest in May, stood right with his hands at his sides while Circuit Judge G.R. Hovey Johnson read charges stemming from Rankin's sexual act with eight teen-aged scouts.

is only dispute was with some of the s of the offenses provided by Assistant es Attorney Thomas McMannus. Rankin

...the dozens of incidents occurred, just as he did when county investigating questioned him in May.

really don't know how all of this got started," Rankin told police, according to a ment McMannus read in court yesterday. Manus said that Rankin told his victims

NOV 17 - Washington Post



David MacDonald Rankin, left, with attorney Joseph DePaul before Judge G.R. Hovey Johnson.

Rankin could be sentenced to a total of 15 years in prison.

"He agreed that he was guilty," DePaul said, "and he felt that he was getting what he believed was a fair sentencing recommendation from the state."

Sentencing is scheduled for Jan. 8. Shortly after the publicity generated by the

case involving Rankin, the National Capital Area Council Boy Scouts of America formed a committee to review the case and similar ones that have occurred in the Washington area during the past several years.

Its report, which will include recommendations on preventing similar incidents, is expected to be complete in about two weeks.



National Capital Area Council  
Boy Scouts of America

9190 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland 20814-3897 • 301 530-9360

November 17, 1987

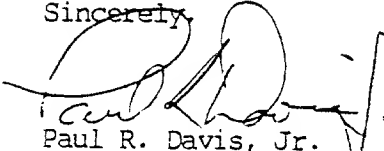
Mr. Paul I. Ernst  
Director of Registration  
Sum No. S-108  
National Office, Boy Scouts of America  
1325 Walnut Hill Lane  
Irving, Texas 75038-3096

Dear Paul:

The enclosed article from the Washington Post is provided for the David M. Rankin file. The article is self explanatory.

Be assured that I will keep you posted on further developments.

Sincerely,



Paul R. Davis, Jr.  
Scout Executive

PRD:jbp

Enclosure

cc: Kenneth W. Davis, NE Area 6 Director  
Debra C. Duhs, Asst. Dr. Insurance and Risk Management  
Carl L. Gell, General Counsel, N.C.A.C.



United Way

Serving the Youth of Washington, D.C., and Seventeen Surrounding Counties of Maryland and Virginia  
Member Agency of United Way of the National Capital Area  
United Givers Fund: Fredericksburg / Spotsylvania / Stafford • United Way of Frederick County, Inc. • United Way of Calvert County  
Dahlgren United Givers Fund, Inc. • United Way of Culpeper, Inc. • Marine Corps Development and Education Command United Fund

CONF013636

# WETBO

## Former Scout Leader Pleads Guilty To 8 Counts of Child Abuse in Md.

By Keith Harrison  
Washington Post Staff Writer

David MacDonald Rankin, a former College Park Boy Scout leader, pleaded guilty yesterday in a Prince George's County court to eight counts of child abuse for having members of his troop perform sex acts with him.

Rankin, 28, who was scoutmaster of Troop 740 at Holy Redeemer Catholic Church for five years until his arrest in May, stood straight with his hands at his sides while Circuit Court Judge G.R. Hovey Johnson read the charges stemming from Rankin's sexual contact with eight teen-aged scouts.

His only dispute was with some of the dates of the offenses provided by Assistant State's Attorney Thomas McManus. Rankin admitted that the dozens of incidents occurred, just as he did when county investigators first questioned him in May.

"I really don't know how all of this got started," Rankin told police, according to a statement McManus read in court yesterday. "I must have been sick or something to let it get started."

McManus said that Rankin told his victims

that the sexual acts were part of an initiation ceremony into a special group within the troop called "The Rowdies." The chosen scouts, the prosecutor said, were required to remove their clothes and masturbate.

Rankin was arrested May 11, after the father of one of the victims notified officials of the National Capital Area Council Boy Scouts of America that Rankin had molested his son.

About six months earlier, McManus said, the father had arrived earlier than planned to pick up his son from what he thought was a regularly scheduled troop meeting. Instead, McManus said, the father found that there was not a meeting at the church hall.

"He looked through a basement window and saw his son with his pants down and what appeared to be [Rankin] playing with his son's genital area," McManus said.

Later, when the father asked his son about the incident, McManus said, the son denied for several months that anything had happened.

As part of the plea agreement, Rankin will plead guilty to three additional counts of child abuse in Charles County, according to his attorney, Joseph DePaul. For all 11 cases,



David MacDonald Rankin, left, with attorney Joseph DePaul before Judge G.R. Hovey Johnson.

Rankin could be sentenced to a total of 15 years in prison.

"He agreed that he was guilty," DePaul said, "and he felt that he was getting what he believed was a fair sentencing recommendation from the state."

Sentencing is scheduled for Jan. 8.

Shortly after the publicity generated by the

case involving Rankin, the National Capital Area Council Boy Scouts of America formed a committee to review the case and similar ones that have occurred in the Washington area during the past several years.

Its report, which will include recommendations on preventing similar incidents, is expected to be complete in about two weeks.

WASH. Post 11-17-87

# Former Scout Leader Pleads Guilty To 8 Counts of Child Abuse in Md.

By Keith Harriston  
Washington Post Staff Writer

David MacDonald Rankin, a former College Park Boy Scout leader, pleaded guilty yesterday in a Prince George's County court to eight counts of child abuse for having members of his troop perform sex acts with him. Rankin, 28, who was scoutmaster of Troop 740 at Holy Redeemer Catholic Church for five years until his arrest in May, stood straight with his hands at his sides while Circuit Court Judge G.R. Hovey Johnson read the charges stemming from Rankin's sexual contact with eight teen-aged scouts.

His only dispute was with some of the dates of the offenses provided by Assistant State's Attorney Thomas McManus. Rankin admitted that the dozens of incidents occurred, just as he did when county investigators first questioned him in May.

"I really don't know how all of this got started," Rankin told police, according to a statement McManus read in court yesterday. "I must have been sick or something to let it get started."

McManus said that Rankin told his victims

that the sexual acts were part of an initiation ceremony into a special group within the troop called "The Rowdies." The chosen scouts, the prosecutor said, were required to remove their clothes and masturbate.

Rankin was arrested May 11, after the father of one of the victims notified officials of the National Capital Area Council Boy Scouts of America that Rankin had molested his son. About six months earlier, McManus said, the father had arrived earlier than planned to pick up his son from what he thought was a regularly scheduled troop meeting. Instead, McManus said, the father found that there was not a meeting at the church hall.

"He looked through a basement window and saw his son with his pants down and what appeared to be [Rankin] playing with his son's genital area," McManus said.

Later, when the father asked his son about the incident, McManus said, the son denied for several months that anything had happened.

As part of the plea agreement, Rankin will plead guilty to three additional counts of child abuse in Charles County, according to his attorney, Joseph DePaul. For all 11 cases,



David MacDonald Rankin, left, with attorney Joseph DePaul before Judge G.R. Hovey Johnson.

Rankin could be sentenced to a total of 15 years in prison.

"He agreed that he was guilty," DePaul said, "and he felt that he was getting what he believed was a fair sentencing recommendation from the state."

Sentencing is scheduled for Jan. 8.

Shortly after the publicity generated by the

case involving Rankin, the National Capital Area Council Boy Scouts of America formed a committee to review the case and similar ones that have occurred in the Washington area during the past several years.

Its report, which will include recommendations on preventing similar incidents, is expected to be complete in about two weeks.

November 10, 1987

Mr. Paul Davis  
Scout Executive  
National Capital Area Council, No. 82

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: David McDonald Rankin

Dear Paul:

Thank you for the detailed information sent concerning the above Scouter.  
This case has been reviewed with our attorney and is now on our permanent  
Confidential File.

Sincerely,

Paul Ernst, Director  
Registration Service

PE/mdw

cc: Northeast Region

READY TO FILE  
NOV 10 1987  
ERIN O'RILEY

CONF013639



National Capital Area Council  
Boy Scouts of America

9190 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland 20814-3897 • 301 530-9360

October 21, 1987

Mr. Paul I. Ernst  
Director of Registration  
SUM No. 108  
National Office, Boy Scouts of America  
1325 Walnut Hill Lane  
Irving, Texas 75038

Dear Paul:

Enclosed report related to David M. Rankin (Troop 740) was received today from the Prince George's County Department of Social Services. This report is furnished for your "confidential" file.

We have been informed that David Rankin has pleaded guilty to one or more charges of sexual abuse. Sentencing is scheduled for mid-November. I will send you additional details and information as received.

Sincerely,

Paul R. Davis, Jr.  
Scout Executive

PRD:jbp

cc: Kenneth W. Davis, Area 6 Director  
Debra C. Duhs, Asst. Dr. Insurance and Risk Management  
Carl L. Gell, General Counsel, N.C.A.C.  
David K. Park, National Legal Counsel  
Edward G. Underwood, Director of Field Service, N.C.A.C.  
Dr. Thomas W. Weir, Task Force Chairman



United Way

Serving the Youth of Washington, D.C., and Seventeen Surrounding Counties of Maryland and Virginia  
Member Agency of United Way of the National Capital Area  
United Givers Fund: Fredericksburg / Spotsylvania / Stafford • United Way of Frederick County, Inc. • United Way of Calvert County  
Danigren United Givers Fund, Inc. • United Way of Culpeper, Inc. • Marine Corps Development and Education Command United Fund

CONF013640

RECEIVED OCT 21 1987

Final Report of Protective  
Services Investigation of  
Boy Scout Troop #740

Submitted by: Prince George's County Department of Social Services  
Protective Services for Children, Area II

CONF013641

FINAL REPORT

Boy Scout Troop #740

On May 12, 1987 the Department of Social Services received a referral alleging on-going, inappropriate sexual behavior between a boy scout member of troop #740 and an adult troop leader. Upon receipt of the initial referral, the Department of Social Services notified the State's attorney's office, Mrs. Carol Fagen of Social Services Administration, Audrey Sutton, Deputy Director and Mr. Henry Gunn, Director. The Department also contacted Mr. Paul R. Davis, Jr., Scout Executive, at the Boy Scouts of America National Headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland and obtained lists of names and addresses of the boys who participated in Boy Scout Troop #740 for the entire period the alleged perpetrator was in a leadership role within the troop. Mr. Davis also supplied the names and addresses of youth members of the Patuxent Chapter Dance Team. This dance team was an offshoot of the boy scout troop. Once again, the alleged perpetrator participated in the Dance Team in a leadership role.

Telephone calls were made to call the parents of the minor boys and to the young men (who are now adults) inviting them to one of two group meetings. These meetings were held at the Department's Ager Road office on June 10, 1987 and June 11, 1987 and were conducted jointly by Protective Services workers, the CID Detectives, and members from the Sexual Assault Center. The meetings were not well attended by parents and only five young men attended. These five were interviewed privately by Protective Service workers after the meeting was concluded.



All of the families, those who attended the meetings and those who did not attend the meetings were mailed follow-up letters. Included in these letters was the HDS pamphlet Child Sexual Abuse Prevention which discussed the physical and behavioral signs that are common among children who have been sexually molested. If any or some of these symptoms were evident, they were urged to seek help through the Sexual Assault Center and telephone numbers were included. Services through Protective Services were also offered and telephone numbers were supplied.

As a result of the investigation, seven sexual abuses were "confirmed" and six were "indicated". Most of the abuse began as innitiation into a select group called "the Rowdies". All the members of this group were also members of the Boy Scout Troop #740, and the alleged perpetrator was again one of the leaders. Fifty six (56) cases were determined as "uncertain" and five were "ruled out".

The number of confirmed and indicated sexual abuse cases is very high and raises serious concerns pertaining to the adequacy of supervision for all troop activities. It is recommended that no troop leader should ever conduct a hike, overnight, or any other activity sponsored by the Boy Scout Troop by him or herself. At least two leaders should be present at all times. It is also recommended that all leaders and potential leaders participate in a sexual abuse prevention training program.

July 13, 1987

Mr. Paul Davis  
Scout Executive  
National Capital Area Council, No. 82

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: David McDonald Rankin

Dear Paul:

Thank you for the Confidential Record Sheet and the other information which we have received. This material is very thorough and will be the basis for our file, which will enable us to refuse registration should attempts be made.

I would like to know the outcome of the legal action which is taking place related to this. If it has now been completed, we would like the conviction and sentencing if these have occurred.

Thank you for your help in giving us a complete file.

Sincerely,

Paul Ernst, Director  
Registration & Subscription Service

eak

cc: Northeast Region

READY TO FILE  
JUL 13 1987  
ERIN ORILEY

CONF013644



**National Capital Area Council  
Boy Scouts of America**

9190 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland 20814-3897 • 301 530-9360

June 8, 1987

Mr. Paul V. Ernst  
Director of Registration  
SUM : 0108  
National Office, Boy Scouts of America  
1325 Walnut Hill Lane  
Irving, Texas 75038-3096

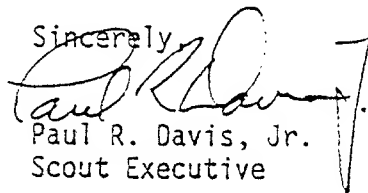
Dear Paul:

Herewith enclosed are confidential record sheets and supporting newspaper articles, written statements and memorandum prepared by professional staff members related to David M. Rankin and Henry J. Whitmer, Jr.

Both of these former Scouters (registration suspended) should be placed on file for future reference. The nature of the charges against these individuals is such that future registration should be denied for the good of the movement.

Please let me know if additional supporting documentation is required for either individual.

Sincerely,

  
Paul R. Davis, Jr.  
Scout Executive

PRD:jbp

cc: Kenneth W. Davis, Area Director  
Carl L. Gell, Legal Counsel  
Dr. Gerard J. Kennedy, Council Commissioner



Serving the Youth of Washington, D.C., and Seventeen Surrounding Counties of Maryland and Virginia

Member Agency of United Way of the National Capital Area

United Givers Fund: Frederickburg / Spotsylvania / Stafford • United Way of Frederick County, Inc. • United Way of Calvert County  
Danlgren United Givers Fund, Inc. • United Way of Culpeper, Inc. • Marine Corps Development and Education Command United Fund

CONF013645

June 4, 1987

Mr. Paul Davis  
Scout Executive  
National Capital Area Council, No. 82

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: David Rankin

Dear Paul:

Thank you for the call which you made to our office related to the above-named individual. We have also received some newspaper articles indicating that Mr. Rankin has been charged with sex abuse.

I am enclosing a Confidential Record Sheet which I would like to have completed so that we may identify Mr. Rankin should he try to register in some other location.

I know you will also keep us informed as more information becomes available so that we can add this to our file.

Please let us know if we may be of help to you.

Sincerely,

Paul Ernst, Director  
Registration & Subscription Service

eak

Encl.

cc: Northeast Region

READY TO FILE  
JUN 04 1987  
ERIN O'RILEY

CONF013646

# Adelphi Scout Leader Faces 3 More Charges in Sexual Abuse Case

By Keith Harrison  
Washington Post Staff Writer

David MacDonald Rankin, an Adelphi Boy Scout leader charged with five counts of child sexual abuse for allegedly having members of his troop perform sex acts with him, faces three additional sex-related charges, Prince George's County police said yesterday.

But as investigators prepared to present the three new charges to a county grand jury, potential legal problems developed with four of the

original counts against the 28-year-old former Marine, sources said. Those charges could be thrown out because of the possibility that police obtained evidence against Rankin through illegal telephone recordings, according to legal experts and court sources.

Rankin was expected to be released from the county Correctional Center today, after county officials install computerized home detention equipment at his home. District Court Judge Graydon S. McKee III lowered Rankin's bond from

\$100,000 to \$10,000 on the condition that Rankin agree to the home detention.

Under terms of his release in the year-old detention program, Rankin may leave home only to go to his job in Rockville. Rankin may not have visitors at his home, and corrections officers can visit his house unannounced.

"Your body and soul belongs to the corrections people," McKee told Rankin at a hearing yesterday afternoon.

Law enforcement sources con-

firmed yesterday that the father of one of the alleged victims recorded a telephone conversation between his son and Rankin in which Rankin gave details of the sexual acts committed with the son and at least five other members of Troop 740. The father turned over the tapes to county police last week.

It is illegal under Maryland law to record conversations without the consent of all parties involved, and any such tapes are not allowed as evidence in trials. Legal experts said that the victims' cases against

Rankin could be in jeopardy, depending upon how investigators used the tapes.

Joseph DePaul, Rankin's attorney, said he will bring up the issue at Rankin's next court date. "If what we have is an illegal wiretap," DePaul said, "then it would definitely taint all the evidence gathered in the case."

Legal observers said the taped phone conversations could lead to the suppression of a written statement Rankin gave to investigators

See SCOUT, C3, Col. 8

## Scout Leader In Adelphi Faces 3 More Charges

SCOUT, From C1

in which Rankin, according to court documents, admitted his sexual involvement with the youths.

Police spokesman Robert Law said that the state's attorney's office would have to determine what effect, if any, the tape recordings would have on the case.

"We still have the actual victims," Law said. "Three more [alleged victims] came forward on their own. We didn't discover them through tapes."

Robert Bonsib, the deputy state's attorney for Prince George's, declined to comment about the tape recordings because of the ongoing criminal investigation of Rankin.

Rankin, who scouting officials said has been involved with Boy Scouts of America since his youth, led the troop that met weekly at a hall adjacent to Holy Redeemer Catholic Church in College Park for five years.

The alleged sexual acts, according to court documents, were part of a purported initiation rite into the Order of the Arrow, which Boy Scout leaders described as a service organization and honor society within scouting.

Police said that the alleged sex offenses occurred when no other adults were around the troop. Some of the acts were allegedly committed while Rankin was alone with one of the youths, police said.

Other times, according to the parent of one of the victims, the acts were committed among a group of youngsters as part of the initiation into what Rankin called the "Rowdies," which was a secret group within the troop. The parent's version was supported by police.

Rankin said he would break their kneecaps if they told anyone, said the parent, who asked to remain anonymous. "My son was terrified."

Staff writer Sari Horvitz  
Contributed to this report.

# Charged in Sex Abuse

## 5 in Adelphi Troop Are Alleged Victims

By Keith Harriston  
Washington Post Staff Writer

An Adelphi Boy Scout leader has been charged with five counts of child sexual abuse for allegedly having members of his troop perform sex acts with him as part of a purported initiation rite, Prince George's County police said yesterday.

David MacDonald Rankin, 28, of 2113 Rolander St., an Eagle Scout and an honorably discharged Marine who has led the troop for five years, was held last night in the county correctional center in lieu of \$100,000 bond.

Carl Gell, general counsel for Boy Scouts of America and vice president of the National Capital Area Council Boy Scouts of America, said yesterday that he knew of no cases in the Washington area with so many alleged victims.

"It is probably the biggest case of this sort to ever come down the road," said Gell, who added that Rankin is one of about 15,000 scouting volunteers in the area, which comprises the District and 16 counties from Fredericksburg, Va., to Frederick, Md.

Although the Boy Scouts of America has a computerized reference system that lists more than 2,000 former Boy Scout leaders who have had problems ranging from alcoholism to inability to manage funds, not all members' names make it into the system.

In September 1985, a Reston scoutmaster who pleaded guilty to

See SCOUT, B10, Col. 1

The Washington Post



David MacDonald Rankin appears at a bond review hearing in sex abuse case.

## Adelphi Scoutmaster Charged

SCOUT, From B1

five counts of sodomy and aggravated sexual battery involving three members of his troop was discovered to have pleaded no contest to similar charges in Rhode Island and received a five-year suspended sentence there. Somehow, scout officials said, the man's name had never been forwarded to the national office.

The same month, it was learned that a Wakefield High School teacher's aide who also worked as an Arlington Boy Scout leader had been charged with aggravated sexual battery of a juvenile.

And less than two weeks later, a former Annapolis assistant Boy Scout leader pleaded guilty to having sexually abused eight boys in his troop over a five-year period.

Rankin was arrested Monday night, three days after the general counsel for Boy Scouts of America told county police that a parent of one member of Rankin's troop may have observed his son and Rankin involved in an unusual act in October.

The charges stem from incidents with five youths age 14 to 16 during the weekly meetings of Troop 740 at a hall adjacent to the Holy Redeemer Catholic Church in College Park, according to court documents. Rankin was the troop's scoutmaster. The incidents allegedly occurred between early 1985 and February 1987, police said.

Rankin, who was in court for a bond review hearing yesterday afternoon, asked District Court Judge Steve Platt to release him without bond. "I went in voluntarily before the police notified me," Rankin told Platt. "I cooperated with the police all the way."

Cpl. Bruce Gentile, a police spokesman, said that victims told investigators that Rankin had the youths perform the acts as part of an initiation into the Order of the Arrow, which Boy Scout leaders described as a service organization and honor society in scouting.

"They apparently went off away from the group when the incidents occurred," Gentile said. "There apparently were no other adults in the room with them."

The father of one victim told police over the weekend that in Oc-

applicants, Gell said. If Rankin filled out his application truthfully, Gell said, he still would have been accepted as a troop leader.

"There was no red flag, nothing out there," Gell said. "This guy was a dark closet case."

The Rev. Ronald Jameson, pastor of Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, which sponsors Troop 740, said he was shocked when police told him on Monday about Rankin's arrest. Jameson said his only contact with Rankin was when Rankin stopped at the rectory each week to get a key to unlock the hall where the troop met.

Rankin, who said in court that he works as a manager of Gilbert Guns Unlimited, a Rockville gun shop, was described by another minister as a kind and generous person who has been active in scouting since his youth and has been active as a member of the College Park United Methodist Church.

The Rev. John Hamilton, pastor of the Methodist church, said yesterday that he has known Rankin and his parents for more than five years.

"He is the last person in the world that I expect would do anything like this," Hamilton said. "You couldn't find a nicer, kinder person. Many, many scout leaders have given me good reports about David. Obviously, he needs help."

# PG scoutmaster charged with sexual abuse of 5 teen-age Scouts

By Adam Sommers  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

A Prince Georges County scoutmaster for the National Capital Area Council has been charged with sexually abusing five Boy Scouts ages 14 to 16 during the last two years.

David McDonald Rankin, 39, of the 2100 block of Rolando Street in Adelphi, was charged with five counts of sexual child abuse and was being held in the County Detention Center in Upper Marlboro on a \$100,000 bail.

Rankin was arrested Tuesday by Prince Georges County police and charged with sexually abusing five Boy Scouts ages 14 to 16 during the last two years.

Rankin was charged with five counts of sexual child abuse and was being held in the County Detention Center in Upper Marlboro on a \$100,000 bail.

Requirements to get into the elite group, Mr. Law said it appears juveniles committed the acts on each other and on Mr. Rankin, and that he performed sexual acts on them.

A longtime scoutmaster and member of the Order of the Arrow, Norbert S. Olshefski of Bowie, said that members need undergo only a week-end of work and learning before getting their sashes, and the initiation ceremony contains no provisions that are not "morally acceptable to society."

"We are still in a state of shock,"

said the Rev. Ronald Jameson, pastor of the church. "We didn't have a clue as to what was going on. We'd see him (Mr. Rankin) walking around the property. He'd ask me for the keys to the hall. We donate the space as we would to any community organization. We're just in shock."

Mr. Gell said the Boy Scouts also had no indication that anything was wrong. "If you look at the guy's past, he was a Scout when he was a kid, he was a Marine, well thought of in the community. There was nothing to tip us off. There was nothing we could

have done."

He said that if Mr. Rankin is found guilty it would not tarnish the reputation of scouting as a whole. "There are 15,000 good Scout leaders in the area. If he is found guilty, then there are still 14,999. We're very concerned about it (the charges) and we wish it did not happen."

Mr. Gell said the acts went undetected, in part, because the victims' parents did not recognize that anything was wrong.

"I think the parents should have been paying a little more attention."

Vance said "It's a

5 May 1987

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Certain information has come to my knowledge in my capacity as the First Counselor to the Bishop of the Carrollton Ward, of the Silver Spring Stake, of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, pertaining to the probable commission of offenses under the State of Maryland laws.

Normally this knowledge would be classified as confidential information under the relationship between the clergy and a church member; however, in view of the gravity of the probable offenses, and of the need to ensure that such offenses do not continue to occur in the future, and in the best interests of the community, and after discussions with higher church priesthood leaders, it is felt that this knowledge should be made available to the appropriate secular authorities for appropriate corrective action. The passage of this information should not be construed as a diminution of the rights of the church to keep appropriate confidential information; or of an agreement that any such future rights of the church should be so abridged.

It should also be noted that this document is submitted only after consultation with the parents of the minor concerned, and after their agreement that such information should be disclosed to the appropriate authorities for corrective action.

Last summer (1986) I had the occasion to conduct a "priesthood worthiness interview" with [REDACTED] a member of the church, in my capacity as a Counselor to the Bishop. At that time something in his answers pertaining to his moral status just "did not ring true." However, after more questioning I decided I must be interpreting my inspiration on his answers wrongly, and dropped the subject.

Again about October I talked with [REDACTED] and again questioned him about his general morality.

Then last fall, approximately in November, [REDACTED] the legal [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] then aged 15, came to me as a church leader and told me that he thought he had observed a sexual act between [REDACTED] and Mr. David Rankin, the leader of the Order of the Arrow Dance Team of the Patuxent District of the Boy Scouts of America. Mr. Rankin is also the Scoutmaster of Troop 740 of the same district. [REDACTED] said in effect that when he went to pick up his son from an evening dance practice at the Riverdale Recreation Center as he walked by a window he thought he saw Mr. Rankin crouching over or bent over [REDACTED] with [REDACTED] trousers down, and that Mr. Rankin was engaging in sex with [REDACTED]



Upon discussion [redacted] said he was not really certain, but that is what it looked like. I said in effect was it possible he was wrong. He admitted it was, but he did not think so.

In view of the fact that I had known Mr. Rankin for about 15 to 20 years since he was a Boy Scout, and as I had never heard any bad or questionable moral reports pertaining to him, or had any reason to doubt Mr. Rankin's morals, I found this very difficult to believe. I felt [redacted] must have seen wrong as he said he just got a "passing glance" through a crack in the curtains or shades as he walked up. He had not had an opportunity to get a clear view of the scene. He agreed that perhaps he had been wrong.

In March 1987 [redacted] was about to turn 16. I asked his parents to have him come to church on a Sunday as I wanted to hold another priesthood worthiness interview, and [redacted] had not been in church for some weeks as he had been working part time, including on Sundays. However, each time an appointment was made [redacted] would miss.

Then on Monday, April 26th, [redacted] telephoned me and asked that I meet with him, and he stated that now he had solid evidence as to Mr. Rankin's actions. I met [redacted] at the church building. He stated that while he and [redacted] were riding home in his pickup truck he had accosted [redacted] with what he thought he had seen, and that he had gotten [redacted] talking, and [redacted] had admitted that he had in fact seen Mr. Rankin and [redacted] in a sexual act. Either [redacted] had already a tape recorder in the truck turned on, or he now turned it on, and he had recorded his and [redacted] conversation.

He played the tape on the recorder. I have known [redacted] since he was about two years old, and I believe it was [redacted] voice. [redacted] said in effect that when he was inducted into the "underworld" group of the Order of the Arrow one of the initiation requirements of this "underworld" was to have sex either with the other boys in the group or with the adult leader. He had been led to believe this was the way the Order of the Arrow always had been. He said that after the initiation the sex was initiated either by a boy leader or the adult leader when some "lower" boy had "goofed up". He said Mr. Rankin was the only adult that he knew of who had had sex with the group. He thought every boy in the group had occasionally had sex with each other. He said the sex usually consisted of "playing with each other" but he also said Mr. Rankin had "sucked" him on the night that [redacted] had come by just at that time. He did not state if the latter type of action had occurred at other times. On the tape he mentioned by name a boy [redacted] and a [redacted] who had been involved. This [redacted] had not wanted to participate when initiated, but apparently had been talked into it.

It was also very apparent from the tape that [redacted] felt if it became known that he had "told" he would be beaten or possibly killed by the others, for telling. He appeared to be very scared

of Mr. Rankin and thought that Mr. Rankin would not do the beating or the violence himself, but that he would have someone else do it. It seemed that [REDACTED] had been told, probably by the boys, that there was a "goon squad" who handled such things for the "lower world."

I recommended to [REDACTED] that he should take this information either to the Scouting authorities or to the civil authorities. He wanted to discuss this first with [REDACTED] mother. She in turn was very afraid that violence would be done either to [REDACTED] or to [REDACTED] if [REDACTED] did this. Apparently Mr. Rankin has a reputation for violence when things do not happen the way he would like; at least both of them so believe. [REDACTED] felt he should go to the Scout leaders; [REDACTED] was afraid of what would happen.

I should add that I have been an adult Boy Scout leader from 1955 until the present, and from July 1965 through September 1967 I was a professional Scout Executive on the Boy Scouts of America payroll, and that in all that time I have never heard of anything like this in either the Order of the Arrow or from any other function in Scouting. In all these years I have never heard of "lower worlds" in the Order of the Arrow. I believe this is some "false doctrine" that was introduced by some individual "on their own."

With [REDACTED] concurrence I discussed the matter verbally with Mr. Don Fornoff, the Patuxent District Scout Executive. He stated that Boy Scouts of America would of course take immediate action, but that they must have something definitive, such as a written statement, or the tape. [REDACTED] was still afraid to take any such action.

I then discussed the whole matter with Bishop Roy McIntosh, Jr., the bishop of the Carrollton Ward of the church. I then asked [REDACTED] to bring [REDACTED] to the church that evening to talk with the Bishop and have a new priesthood worthiness interview.

[REDACTED] picked [REDACTED] up from his part time job and drove him directly to the church. The Bishop and I drove together to the church. The Bishop and [REDACTED] went into the Bishop's office, and [REDACTED] and I went into the next office and talked.

After over an hour the Bishop came to where we were and said that in talking with [REDACTED], [REDACTED] had said in effect the same as I had heard on the tape. The Bishop said he had not told [REDACTED] about the tape, but had approached it from "how have things been going, and are you doing anything that is immoral."

All four of us then met together in the Bishop's office, and it was obvious from [REDACTED] conversation that he had in effect said yes, it had been happening. [REDACTED] at this time also said that he knew of no other adult who had been involved except Mr. Rankin and that he did not think any other adults knew about it except we three. He also said he had not been involved for about three

months and that he had been trying to stay away from the dance team meetings. He said that the incidents had occurred at the Riverdale Recreation Center, at some room in the basement of the Holy Redeemer Church which he called "the pit" where the dance team met, and at various outdoor locations when the team was camping. [REDACTED] also said that such things had never happened at a meeting of Troop 740 that he knew of; only at the Order of the Arrow Dance Team events.

[REDACTED] and I have discussed this matter since and he believes it should be reported to the appropriate authorities, but [REDACTED] is scared that if he reports it Mr. Rankin in some manner will have physical violence done either to [REDACTED], or to [REDACTED] or both. I have tried to explain that there comes a time when one must do what is right and ignore the consequences, and that besides we really don't know that any violence would even be attempted, and that that is probably all a scare to ensure secrecy. But she is still frightened of the possible consequences. [REDACTED] asked would I or the Bishop write the letter that the Boy Scouts of America needs to take the appropriate action.

The Bishop then discussed this matter with the Stake President (the next higher church echelon) but then the Bishop had to leave town on business for several weeks. Today I discussed this matter with the Stake President and he concurred that I should write the letter in the Bishop's absence.

Although I have no evidence except that which is perhaps hearsay evidence, it is my belief that there is sufficient reason to believe moral offenses were committed as well as legal offenses, and that they constitute sufficient probable cause for further investigation under the Maryland Child Abuse Acts.

LEE F. ISON  
First Counselor to the Bishop,  
Carrollton Ward,  
Silver Spring Stake,  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

April 30, 1987

TO: Paul Davis  
FROM: Don Fornoff  
CC: Garland Kitchens  
RE: Child Abuse Allegations Regarding OA Dance Team Advisor

April 27

4:00 p.m.

I received phone call from Lee Ison, first counselor of Carrollton Ward, LDS Church. Ison is the Scout Coordinator and a past significant supporter of district projects.

Ison was approached by [REDACTED] parent of [REDACTED] a member of the OA dance team of Patuxent District. [REDACTED] and his wife determined that [REDACTED] was part of "activities" which call into question the integrity of David Rankin, OA dance team advisor and also current Scoutmaster of Troop 740 of Holy Redeemer Catholic Church of College Park, Maryland. [REDACTED] alleges homosexual activity on the part of Mr. Rankin and several (not named) boys as part of an OA dance team initiation called the "underground". (This point should be confirmed). Mr. Rankin is the only adult named. [REDACTED] was a part of the abusive activity.

I told Ison that a formal letter was needed by Scouting officials for us to act. Garland Kitchens was apprised of the situation.

11:45 p.m.

Ison called to inform me the parents would not sign a letter of complaint, citing fear that the boy would be taken from them by a child protective services program. This development was confirmed after the parents, the boy, Ison and Roy McIntosh, Bishop of the LDS Ward, met to determine a course of action. (I believe the parents sought help from church leadership as a normal course of action as a Mormon family).

The Bishop and Ison indicated that they would send a letter to the Scout Executive if the parents would not, believing the credibility of the complaint warranted that action.

CONF013654

April 28

Two additional conversations with Ison produce no further action on his part or the parents.

I briefed District Chairman Rick Brandon on the advice of Garland Kitchens because Rankin is scheduled to receive the District Award of Merit on May 8. Brandon and I agreed the award must not be presented (unless the whole allegation "blows up in smoke"). He will proceed to accomplish that on a "no questions asked" basis with others involved in the awards process.

April 29

5:00 p.m.

Phone conversation with Ison again showed no action. However, the Bishop has conversed with the stake president and the stake president also agrees that the bishop and Ison should send a letter if the parents do not. The letter would come to the Scout Executive (hand-carry) by mid-week of the week of May 4.

I asked Ison was he absolutely certain of the credibility of the complaint. He replied yes.

Reference

Lee Ison -  
First Counselor

Roy McIntosh  
Ward Bishop

Lester [REDACTED]  
Parent

Dale [REDACTED]  
Boy

David Rankin  
Scoutmaster T740  
OA Dance Team Advisor

Holy Redeemer Catholic Church  
Sponsor, T740  
Rev. Jamison

5 May 1987

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Certain information has come to my knowledge in my capacity as the First Counselor to the Bishop of the Carrollton Ward, of the Silver Spring Stake, of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, pertaining to the probable commission of offenses under the State of Maryland laws.

Normally this knowledge would be classified as confidential information under the relationship between the clergy and a church member; however, in view of the gravity of the probable offenses, and of the need to ensure that such offenses do not continue to occur in the future, and in the best interests of the community, and after discussions with higher church priesthood leaders, it is felt that this knowledge should be made available to the appropriate secular authorities for appropriate corrective action. The passage of this information should not be construed as a diminution of the rights of the church to keep appropriate confidential information; or of an agreement that any such future rights of the church should be so abridged.

It should also be noted that this document is submitted only after consultation with the parents of the minor concerned, and after their agreement that such information should be disclosed to the appropriate authorities for corrective action.

Last summer (1986) I had the occasion to conduct a "priesthood worthiness interview" with [REDACTED] a member of the church, in my capacity as a Counselor to the Bishop. At that time something in his answers pertaining to his moral status just "did not ring true." However, after more questioning I decided I must be interpreting my inspiration on his answers wrongly, and dropped the subject.

Again about October I talked with Dale and again questioned him about his general morality.

Then last fall, approximately in November, [REDACTED] the legal father of [REDACTED], then aged 15, came to me as a church leader and told me that he thought he had observed a sexual act between [REDACTED] and Mr. David Rankin, the leader of the Order of the Arrow Dance Team of the Patuxent District of the Boy Scouts of America. Mr. Rankin is also the Scoutmaster of Troop 740 of the same district. [REDACTED] said in effect that when he went to pick up his son from an evening dance practice at the Riverdale Recreation Center as he walked by a window he thought he saw Mr. Rankin crouching over or bent over [REDACTED] with [REDACTED] trousers down, and that Mr. Rankin was engaging in sex with [REDACTED]

Upon discussion he said he was not really certain, but that is what it looked like. I said in effect was it possible he was wrong. He admitted it was, but he did not think so.

In view of the fact that I had known Mr. Rankin for about 15 to 20 years since he was a Boy Scout, and as I had never heard any bad or questionable moral reports pertaining to him, or had any reason to doubt Mr. Rankin's morals, I found this very difficult to believe. I felt [redacted] must have seen wrong as he said he just got a "passing glance" through a crack in the curtains or shades as he walked up. He had not had an opportunity to get a clear view of the scene. He agreed that perhaps he had been wrong.

In March 1987 [redacted] was about to turn 16. I asked his parents to have him come to church on a Sunday as I wanted to hold another priesthood worthiness interview, and [redacted] had not been in church for some weeks as he had been working part time, including on Sundays. However, each time an appointment was made [redacted] would miss.

Then on Monday, April 26th, [redacted] telephoned me and asked that I meet with him, and he stated that now he had solid evidence as to Mr. Rankin's actions. I met [redacted] at the church building. He stated that while he and [redacted] were riding home in his pickup truck he had accosted [redacted] with what he thought he had seen, and that he had gotten [redacted] talking, and [redacted] had admitted that he had in fact seen Mr. Rankin and Dale in a sexual act. Either [redacted] had already a tape recorder in the truck turned on, or he now turned it on, and he had recorded his and [redacted] conversation.

He played the tape on the recorder. I have known [redacted] since he was about two years old, and I believe it was [redacted] voice. [redacted] said in effect that when he was inducted into the "underworld" group of the Order of the Arrow one of the initiation requirements of this "underworld" was to have sex either with the other boys in the group or with the adult leader. He had been led to believe this was the way the Order of the Arrow always had been. He said that after the initiation the sex was initiated either by a boy leader or the adult leader when some "lower" boy had "goofed up". He said Mr. Rankin was the only adult that he knew of who had had sex with the group. He thought every boy in the group had occasionally had sex with each other. He said the sex usually consisted of "playing with each other" but he also said Mr. Rankin had "sucked" him on the night that [redacted] had come by just at that time. He did not state if the latter type of action had occurred at other times. On the tape he mentioned by name a boy [redacted] and a [redacted] who had been involved. This [redacted] had not wanted to participate when initiated, but apparently had been talked into it.

It was also very apparent from the tape that [redacted] felt if it became known that he had "told" he would be beaten or possibly killed by the others, for telling. He appeared to be very scared

of Mr. Rankin and [REDACTED] thought that Mr. Rankin would not do the beating or the violence himself, but that he would have someone else do it. It seemed that [REDACTED] had been told, probably by the boys, that there was a "goon squad" who handled such things for the "lower world."

I recommended to [REDACTED] that he should take this information either to the Scouting authorities or to the civil authorities. He wanted to discuss this first with [REDACTED] mother. She in turn was very afraid that violence would be done either to [REDACTED] or to Lester if Lester did this. Apparently Mr. Rankin has a reputation for violence when things do not happen the way he would like; at least both of them so believe. [REDACTED] felt he should go to the Scout leaders; [REDACTED] was afraid of what would happen.

I should add that I have been an adult Boy Scout leader from 1955 until the present, and from July 1965 through September 1967 I was a professional Scout Executive on the Boy Scouts of America payroll, and that in all that time I have never heard of anything like this in either the Order of the Arrow or from any other function in Scouting. In all these years I have never heard of "lower worlds" in the Order of the Arrow. I believe this is some "false doctrine" that was introduced by some individual "on their own."

With [REDACTED] concurrence I discussed the matter verbally with Mr. Don Fornoff, the Patuxent District Scout Executive. He stated that Boy Scouts of America would of course take immediate action, but that they must have something definitive, such as a written statement, or the tape. [REDACTED] was still afraid to take any such action.

I then discussed the whole matter with Bishop Roy McIntosh, Jr., the bishop of the Carrollton Ward of the church. I then asked [REDACTED] to bring [REDACTED] to the church that evening to talk with the Bishop and have a new priesthood worthiness interview.

[REDACTED] picked [REDACTED] up from his part time job and drove him directly to the church. The Bishop and I drove together to the church. The Bishop and [REDACTED] went into the Bishop's office, and [REDACTED] and I went into the next office and talked.

After over an hour the Bishop came to where we were and said that in talking with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] had said in effect the same as I had heard on the tape. The Bishop said he had not told [REDACTED] about the tape, but had approached it from "how have things been going, and are you doing anything that is immoral."

All four of us then met together in the Bishop's office, and it was obvious from [REDACTED] conversation that he had in effect said yes, it had been happening. [REDACTED] at this time also said that he knew of no other adult who had been involved except Mr. Rankin and that he did not think any other adults knew about it except we three. He also said he had not been involved for about three



months and that he had been trying to stay away from the dance team meetings. [redacted] said that the incidents had occurred at the Riverdale Recreation Center, at some room in the basement of the Holy Redeemer Church which he called "the pit" where the dance team met, and at various outdoor locations when the team was camping. [redacted] also said that such things had never happened at a meeting of Troop 740 that he knew of; only at the Order of the Arrow Dance Team events.

[redacted] and I have discussed this matter since and he believes it should be reported to the appropriate authorities, but [redacted] is scared that if he reports it Mr. Rankin in some manner will have physical violence done either to [redacted] or to [redacted], or both. I have tried to explain that there comes a time when one must do what is right and ignore the consequences, and that besides we really don't know that any violence would even be attempted, and that that is probably all a scare to ensure secrecy. But she is still frightened of the possible consequences. [redacted] asked would I or the Bishop write the letter that the Boy Scouts of America needs to take the appropriate action.

The Bishop then discussed this matter with the Stake President (the next higher church echelon) but then the Bishop had to leave town on business for several weeks. Today I discussed this matter with the Stake President and he concurred that I should write the letter in the Bishop's absence.

Although I have no evidence except that which is perhaps hearsay evidence, it is my belief that there is sufficient reason to believe moral offenses were committed as well as legal offenses, and that they constitute sufficient probable cause for further investigation under the Maryland Child Abuse Acts.

LEE F. ISON  
First Counselor to the Bishop,  
Carrollton Ward,  
Silver Spring Stake,  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Executive Board Member  
FROM: Carl L. Gell, General Counsel/VP Program  
DATE: May 13, 1987  
RE: David Rankin - Child Abuse Charges

---

On Monday, May 11, 1987, David M. Rankin, Scoutmaster of Troop 740, was charged by the Prince Georges County Police with five counts of child sexual abuse for allegedly having members of an Order of the Arrow Dance team perform sex acts with him as part of a purported initiation rite. The incidents allegedly occurred between early 1985 and February of 1987.

Concern over the matter was first brought to the Council's attention on April 27 by a district scouter after he has been alerted by a parent of one of the boys. The parents had suspicions of the problem since October of 1986 but did not speak to any one about it, apparently fearing physical harm to the boy.

When brought to our attention, the situation moved "up the ladder" from the District Executive to the Scout Executive. Paul Davis called me and we reviewed the facts as presented in a confidential memo. We felt the information gave us reason to contact the appropriate

authorities. I went to the Criminal Investigation Division of the Prince Georges County Police and explained what we knew. They investigated and charges were brought against Mr. Rankin within 48 hours.

Rankin was advised by letter that his registration with BSA was suspended and that he must sever all relationships with BSA at once.

The Washington Post

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 1987

# WILDERO

## Scoutmaster Charged in Sex Abuse

*5 in Adelphi Troop  
Are Alleged Victims*

By Keith Harriston  
Washington Post Staff Writer

An Adelphi Boy Scout leader has been charged with five counts of child sexual abuse for allegedly having members of his troop perform sex acts with him as part of an initiation rite, Prince George's County police said yesterday.

David MacDonald Rankin, 28, of 2113 Rolander St., an Eagle Scout and an honorably discharged Marine who has led the troop for five years, was held last night in the county correctional center in lieu of \$100,000 bond.

Carl Gell, general counsel for Boy Scouts of America and vice president of the National Capital Area Council Boy Scouts of America, said yesterday that he knew of no cases in the Washington area with so many alleged victims.

"It is probably the biggest case of this sort to ever come down the road," said Gell, who added that Rankin is one of about 15,000 scouting volunteers in the area, which comprises the District and 16 counties from Fredericksburg, Va., to Frederick, Md.

Although the Boy Scouts of America has a computerized reference system that lists more than 2,000 former Boy Scout leaders who have had problems ranging from alcoholism to inability to manage funds, not all members' names make it into the system.

In September 1985, a Reston scoutmaster who pleaded guilty to

See SCOUT, B10, Col. 1



David Macdonald Rankin appears at a bond review hearing in sex abuse case.

# Adelphi Scoutmaster Charged

## SCOUT, From B1

five counts of sodomy and aggravated sexual battery involving three members of his troop was discovered to have pleaded no contest to similar charges in Rhode Island and received a five-year suspended sentence there. Somehow, scout officials said, the man's name had never been forwarded to the national office.

The same month, it was learned that a Wakefield High School teacher's aide who also worked as an Arlington Boy Scout leader had been charged with aggravated sexual battery of a juvenile.

And less than two weeks later, a former Annapolis assistant Boy Scout leader pleaded guilty to having sexually abused eight boys in his troop over a five-year period.

Rankin was arrested Monday night, three days after the general counsel for Boy Scouts of America told county police that a parent of one member of Rankin's troop may have observed his son and Rankin involved in an unusual act in October.

The charges stem from incidents with five youths age 14 to 16 during the weekly meetings of Troop 740 at a hall adjacent to the Holy Redeemer Catholic Church in College Park, according to court docu-

ments. Rankin was the troop's scoutmaster. The incidents allegedly occurred between early 1985 and February 1987, police said.

Rankin, who was in court for a bond review hearing yesterday afternoon, asked District Court Judge Steve Platt to release him without bond. "I went in voluntarily before the police notified me," Rankin told Platt. "I cooperated with the police all the way."

Cpl. Bruce Gentile, a police spokesman, said that victims told investigators that Rankin had the youths perform the acts as part of an initiation into the Order of the Arrow, which Boy Scout leaders described as a service organization and honor society in scouting.

"They apparently went off away from the group when the incidents occurred," Gentile said. "There apparently were no other adults in the room with them."

The father of one victim told police over the weekend that in October he saw "what he felt was his son involved in a sexual act with David Rankin," according to the statement of charges against Rankin filed in District Court.

Police said they were not sure why no one notified police until last Friday.

"I'm sure it takes a lot of soul searching for the victim and his or her family to come forward in situations like this," Gentile said.

Troop leaders must fill out applications before they are accepted, Gell said.

The area councils usually rely on the sponsoring organizations—in this case, the Holy Redeemer Catholic Church—to screen unsuitable

applicants, Gell said. If Rankin filled out his application truthfully, Gell said, he still would have been accepted as a troop leader.

"There was no red flag, nothing out there," Gell said. "This guy was a dark closet case."

The Rev. Ronald Jameson, pastor of Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, which sponsors Troop 740, said he was shocked when police told him on Monday about Rankin's arrest. Jameson said his only contact with Rankin was when Rankin stopped at the rectory each week to get a key to unlock the hall where the troop met.

Rankin, who said in court that he works as a manager of Gilbert Guns Unlimited, a Rockville gun shop, was described by another minister as a kind and generous person who has been active in scouting since his youth and has been active as a member of the College Park United Methodist Church.

The Rev. John Hamilton, pastor of the Methodist church, said yesterday that he has known Rankin and his parents for more than five years.

"He is the last person in the world that I expect would do anything like this," Hamilton said. "You couldn't find a nicer, kinder person. Many, many scout leaders have given me good reports about David. Obviously, he needs help."

## Scout leader accused of sex abuse

By MIKE FOLKS

One Boy Scout official described David MacDonald Rankin as a "sterling" choice to be a troop leader.

"He had been active in his church. He had been honorably discharged from the U.S. Marines," he had been a Scout and had no criminal record, said Carl Gell, legal counsel for the National Council of Boy Scouts of America.

But yesterday, Rankin, 28, of 2113 Roland St., Adelphi, was being held on a \$100,000 bond in the county correctional center on charges that during the past two years he has sexually abused five of the five dozen or so Scouts in his College Park troop.

"It's a shame," said Gell, referring to Rankin's arrest on Monday. "It was the Boy Scouts — I, myself — who brought this to the Prince George's County Criminal Investigation Division."

### Five youths said to be molested

Police say the sexual abuse took place in a room at a College Park church where the troop met regularly.

The investigation leading to Rankin's arrest came after the father of a Scout "saw what he thought was his son involved in a sexual act" with Rankin last October, according to charging documents filed in Prince George's District Court. "The victim admitted to the abuse and stated that several other boys were involved," the documents say.

The Scout said Rankin had the boys, who were in their teens, perform sex acts "in order to get into his select Scout group" within the troop, the documents say. Rankin admitted in a written statement to police that

he had been sexually involved with the Scouts, the charging document says.

At a bond hearing yesterday, Rankin, a manager at Gilbert Guns Unlimited in Rockville, asked that he be released on personal recognizance.

"I went in voluntarily before the police asked me. I've cooperated with the police all the way through," Rankin said in making his request.

Judge Steven Platt denied the request, citing the severity of the charges and the fact that Rankin's parents, with whom he lives, were out of state on vacation and could not be reached.

Outside the courtroom yesterday, the Rev. John Ham-

ilton, who said he has been a family friend of Rankin's for five years, expressed his dismay over the charges lodged against the Scout leader.

"I'm upset. I'm deeply shocked this has happened," said Hamilton, whose church was not the location where the abuse is supposed to have occurred and did not have any affiliation with the troop. "I've always known David as a fine young man."

Hamilton said Rankin had been heavily involved with Scouting in his younger years and "just worked his way up to become a leader."

Yesterday, an official at the church where the sexual abuse allegedly took place, said the congregation "loosely sponsored the troop by supplying it space" to hold its meetings, but there was no greater involvement with the church.

Planned soon SCOUTS A-10

## Troop leader is charged with abusing five Scouts

### SCOUTS from A1

While the church official said he did not have direct contact with Rankin, he had heard from parents that Rankin worked well with youths and never had any problems.

Gell said the Boy Scouts of America is required to have state police check the backgrounds of adults who are paid for their work, but not volunteers such as Rankin.

"In this case, it (requiring a background check) didn't make a difference. His (Rankin's) record was sterling," Gell said.

Gell, whose local group represents serving 60,000 Scouts in the Washington area and grants the authority to set up troops, said Rankin's registration with the Boy Scouts of America council has been cancelled.

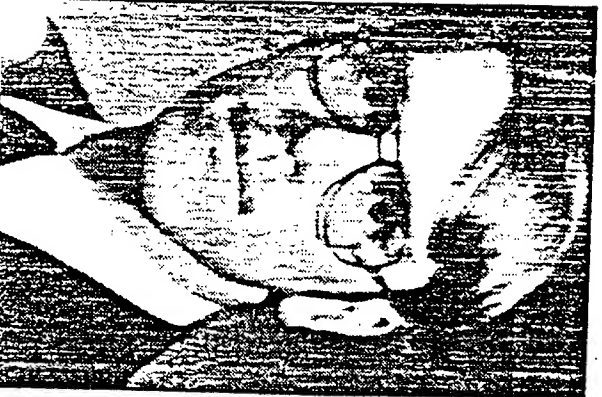
"I'm upset. I'm deeply shocked this has happened. I've always known David as a fine young man."

The Rev. John Hamilton

pending pending the outcome of the case.

One of Rankin's neighbors, who declined to be identified, said he lived in the same neighborhood for more than 20 years.

"(The Rankin) was quiet, a loner that kept to himself, the neighbor said. "That's horrible, if the allegations are true."



David MacDonald Rankin

# Scout leader faces abuse charges

By MIKE FOLKS  
Journal staff writer

## LANHAM

One Boy Scouts official described David MacDonald Rankin as a "sterling" choice to be a troop leader.

"He had been active in his church. He had been honorably discharged from the U.S. Marines," he had been a Scout and had no criminal record, said Carl Gell, legal counsel for the National Capital Council of Boy Scouts of America.

But yesterday, Rankin, 28, of Adelphi, was being held on \$100,000 bond in the Prince George's County Corrections Center on charges that over the past two years he has sexually abused five of the three dozen or so Scouts in his College Park troop.

"It's a shame," said Gell, referring to Rankin's arrest on Monday. "It was the Boy Scouts — I myself — who brought this to the Prince George's County Criminal Investigation Division."

Police say the sexual abuse took place in a room at a College Park church where the troop met regularly.

The investigation leading to Rankin's arrest came after the father of a Scout "saw what he thought was his son involved in a sexual act" with Rankin last October, according to charging documents filed in Prince George's District Court.

"The victim admitted to the abuse and stated that several other boys were involved," the documents say.

The Scout said Rankin had the teenage Scouts perform sex acts "in order to get into his select Scout group" within the troop, the documents say.

Rankin admitted in a written statement to police that he had been sexually involved with the Scouts, the charging document says.

At a bond hearing yesterday, Judge Steven Platt denied Rankin's request that he be released on personal recognizance.

"I went in voluntarily before the police asked me. I've cooperated with the police all the way through," said Rankin, a manager at Gilbert Guns Unlimited in Rockville.

Platt cited the severity of the charges and the fact that Rankin's parents, with whom he lives, were on vacation and could not be reached.

Outside the courtroom yesterday, the Rev. John Hamilton, who said he has been a family friend of Rankin's for five years, expressed his surprise over the charges lodged against the Scout leader.

"I'm upset. I'm deeply shocked this has happened," said Hamilton, whose church was not the location where the abuse is supposed to have occurred and did not have any affiliation with the troop. "I've always known David as a fine young man."

Hamilton said Rankin had been heavily involved with scouting in his younger years and "just worked his way up to become a leader."

# Scout's father gathered evidence

By MIKE FOLKS  
Journal staff writer

ADELPHI  
Driven to protect his son from what he believed was sexual abuse by his Boy Scout troop leader, the father of a Scout took an extraordinary measure.

He taped two of his son's telephone conversations — one with the Scout leader and the other with another Scout, who police say also was abused by the troop leader.

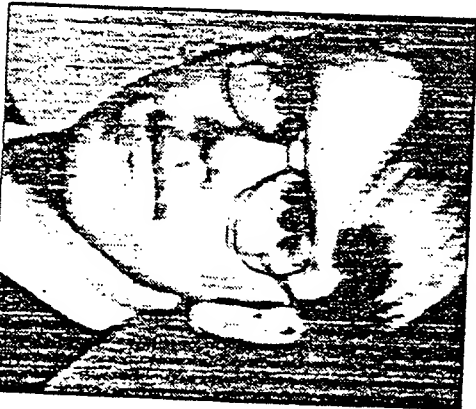
"I had to do something," the father said yesterday, his voice trailing off to a pause. "I had to do it."

The troop leader, David MacDonald Rankin, 28, of Adelphi, was the unwitting subject of the father's investigation that led to Rankin's arrest Monday. He is charged with sexually abusing five Scouts at a College Park church. Rankin remained jailed yesterday on \$100,000 bond.

The taped conversations helped police identify four other teenage Scouts in the College Park troop who admitted to investigators that Rankin had sexually abused them for nearly two years, the father said. "The (police investigators) look it (the tape) containing the taped conversations as evidence," he said.

Police yesterday would not confirm that they have received the tapes.

In an hour-long interview, the father, who requested anonymity to protect his son and family, reflected



**David Rankin**  
*Taped phone conversations*

on their ordeal.

For more than a year, the son had undergone some personally changes, including "badmouthing his mother" and "hooking (skipping) a lot of school." There was no apparent reason for the changes, the father said.

The boy was involved heavily with scouting, meeting several times a week with Rankin. The father said he would drive his son to the meetings and Rankin would offer to drive him home. "I thought he was doing me a favor," the father said.

But he had some misgivings about the friendship his son had developed with Rankin, the father said, explaining that his son's coming home late after Scout dinners with Rankin kept him wondering. After one dinner, when his son returned home around 1:30 a.m., he learned from a Scout's mother that her son had come home at 11:30 p.m. Rankin and all of the Scouts had driven together to the dinner, the father said.

It was last October when the father's suspicions turned to horror, he said.

When the father went to pick up his son at a community center where the troop was holding a meeting, he saw his son and Rankin committing what he believed to be a sex act. He saw them, he said, after he sneaked up to the building and peered through a 2-inch space between a drawn window shade and a window pane.

"I just couldn't believe what I was seeing," the father said, recalling how he sneaked back to his vehicle and beeped the horn. His son came out and denied any wrongdoing when questioned by his father.

Angered, upset and confused, the father told a friend of his suspicions and the incident at the community center. The friend told him to watch his son closely.

Since October, the father never let his son get into a situation where he would be alone with Rankin, he said.

"When I drove him to a meeting, I stayed until it was over. He (Rankin) was always after me to let me let him take him (his son) home."

The father — believing that his son was skipping school to meet Rankin on Wednesdays, which Rankin had off from his job as a manager at Gilbert Guns Unlimited in Rockville — would stay home from work and sit outside the school to watch his son's movements.

Within a few days, the father and son sat at a convenience store parking lot, the father said. "He told me everything. . . . I thought it was just my boy (who was a victim)." He said he "never dreamed" that several other members of the troop could be involved.

It was early last week, the father said, that he asked his son if he knew another Scout who would talk about the sexual abuse. "I asked him if he would do this for me."

His son called another Scout, who talked openly about sexual liaisons with Rankin as the conversation was taped, the father said.

At the father's request, the son then called Rankin.

"Rankin mentioned names, places, dates and even asked him (his son) to sneak out of the house that night," the father said about the taped conversation, which he turned over to police. At least five Scouts were named on the tape.



THE

PRINCE GEORGE'S

# Journal

Prince George's County's daily newspaper

May 4, 1987

THURSDAY

25 cents

## Scouts struggle for explanation

By LARRY PERL  
Journal staff writer

Richard Brandon of Howle knew he would have to say something at last night's monthly roundtable of county Boy Scouts leaders, who were stunned and shaken this week by sexual child abuse charges against one of their own.

"I think something needs to be said. I'm not sure what," said Brandon, chairman of the northern Prince George's district of Boy Scouts of America, before the meeting. "A lot of things have gone through my mind on what to say and what not to say. What do we say?"

The roundtable meetings at Parkdale High School are forums for discussion of upcoming events and current Scouting issues. This time, the issue was painful.

David McDonald Rankin, 28, of 2113 Rolander St., Adelphi, was arrested Monday and was still being held in custody late yesterday on \$100,000 on charges of sexually abusing five teen-age Scouts in the College Park troop that he had led for five years.

Last night, 30 Scout leaders at the meeting struggled for answers, assurances and comforting words to pass on to Scouts and their parents.

Brandon found the right words to say when Robert Blackburn, Scoutmaster of one Prince George's troop, noted that his son was being teased by schoolmates about being a Scout.

Please see LEADERS, A7

## Leaders address case

LEADERS from A1

"We're going to get more of it," Brandon said.

But Brandon added, "Certainly, talking about it, we can address it head on. We can't address it by sweeping it under the rug. We've got to pick ourselves up . . . I'm sad as hell that it happened. But we're going to go on."

The chairman of the citizen advisory committee for Rankin's troop said it's uncertain whether a camping trip planned for this weekend will still be held. But he said parents still support the troop and Rankin's assistants are assuming command, pending the outcome of Rankin's case. Rankin has been placed on administrative leave.

"We have leadership," the advisory committee chairman said. "We have support. I think the attitude in the troop is that we're going to overcome this."

Anthony Santini, assistant Scoutmaster of a Riverdale troop, proposed during the meeting that Scout leaders sponsor a "parents night," saying not enough parents volunteer to be Scout leaders or assistants, and not enough join their sons on weekend camping trips.

"The parents of the Scouts need to be involved," said district commander Don Fornoff. "The Scout leaders need to make sure that occurs."

Another issue discussed at the meeting was how much time Scout leaders can or should spend trying to guard against such incidents. "You'll never stop it from happening," Brandon said. "If our role is to go out and find sex offenders, we're in the wrong business."

Some leaders expressed concern about ruining a colleague's reputation by reporting suspicions to po-

lice or Scout superiors. Fornoff urged that leaders report suspicions, but warned, "If they can't back it up, we can't act."

The National Capital Area Council of Boy Scouts of America is forming a task force to review how Boy Scout leaders are chosen and screened, said general counsel Carl Gell, who doesn't expect any opposition when the idea is proposed at the May 19 meeting of the board of directors.

Gell, who wasn't at last night's meeting, said all Scouts get a handbook that includes a section on sexual abuse. "It tells these kids to be alert, that their bodies are theirs. It's the same as the drug stuff — say no," he said, adding that a pamphlet on sexual abuse is also distributed.

But Gell said there are limits to what officials can do to prevent a recurrence of what he called "an aberration."

He said state-required criminal background checks are conducted on the organization's 60 paid, administrative employees, and a computerized list kept of more than 2,000 volunteer Boy Scout troop leaders whose registrations were suspended or revoked, so that their names will appear on the computer if they apply to work in this area or elsewhere.

However, the troop leaders and 15,000 other volunteers, such as Rankin, are exempt from the state-required background checks for paid workers who care for children.

Gell said a background check wouldn't have shown warning signs for the sexual abuse that police say Rankin committed, because he had no criminal record, was active in his church and was honorably discharged from the U.S. Marines. "If it's a clean guy, it's not going to show up," Gell said.

# Father: 'I had to do something'

## Tape leads to arrest

### Phone tapes lead to man's arrest

#### Father:

'I had to do something'

BY MIKE FOLKS

Journal Staff Writer

Driven to protect his son from what he believed was sexual abuse by his Boy Scout troop leader, the father of a Scout took an extraordinary measure.

He taped two of his son's telephone conversations — one with the Scout leader and the other with another Scout, who police say was also abused by the troop leader.

"I had to do something," the father said yesterday, his voice trailing off to a pause. "I had to do it."

The troop leader, David MacDonal Rankin, 28, of 2113 Roland St., Adelphi, was the unwitting subject of the father's amateur investigation that led to Rankin's arrest Monday. He is charged with sexually abusing five Scouts at a College Park church. Rankin remained jailed yesterday on \$100,000 bond.

The taped conversations helped police identify four other teen-age Scouts in the College Park troop who admitted to investigators that Rankin had sexually abused them for nearly two years, the father said. Police yesterday would not confirm that they have received the tapes.

In an hourlong interview, the father, who requested anonymity to protect his son and family, reflected on their ordeal.

For more than a year, the son had undergone some personality changes, including "bad mauling his mother" and "hooking (skip-

#### SCOUTS FROM A1

pling) a lot of school." There was no apparent reason for the changes, the father said.

The boy was involved heavily with Scouting, meeting several times a week with Rankin. The father said he would drive his son to the meetings and Rankin would offer to drive him home. "I thought he was doing me a favor," the father said.

But he had some misgivings about the friendship his son had developed with Rankin, the father said, explaining that his son's coming home late after Scout dinners with Rankin kept him wondering. After one dinner, when his son returned home around 1:30 a.m., he learned from a Scout's mother that her son had come home at 11:30 p.m. Rankin and all of the Scouts had driven together to the dinner, the father said.

It was last October when the father's suspicions turned to horror, he said.

"When the father went to pick up his son at a community center where the troop was holding a meeting, he saw his son and Rankin committing what he believed to be a sex act. He saw them, he said, after he sneaked up to the building and peered through a 2-inch space between a drawn window shade and a window pane.

"I just couldn't believe what I was seeing," the father said, recalling how he sneaked back to his vehicle and beeped the horn. His son came out and denied any wrongdoing when questioned by his father.

Angered, upset and confused, the father told a friend of his suspicions and the incident at the community center. The friend told him to watch his son closely.

Since October, the father never let his son get into a situation where he would be alone with Rankin, he said.

"When I drove him to a meeting, I stayed until it was over. He (Rankin) was always after me to let me let him take him (his son) home."

The father — believing that his son was skipping school to meet Rankin on Wednesdays, which Rankin had off from his job as a manager at Gilbert Guns Unlimited in Rockville — would stay home from work and sit outside the school to watch his son's movements. He continued to question his son about his relationship with Rankin, but the youth refused to open up, he said.

Several weeks ago, when his son left a Scout meeting called by Rankin, the father learned that he wanted to drop out of the Scouts.

"I asked him why. He said 'You'd never understand. Maybe I'll tell you some day.'"

Within a few days, the father and son sat at a convenience store parking lot, the father said. "He told me everything. . . . I thought it was just my boy (who was a victim)." He said he "never dreamed" that several other members of the troop could be involved.

It was early last week, the father said, that he asked his son if he knew another Scout who would talk about the sexual abuse. "I asked him if he would do this for me."

His son called another Scout, who talked openly about sexual liaisons with Rankin as the conversation was taped, the father said.

At the father's request, the son then called Rankin.

"Rankin mentioned names, places, dates and even asked him (his son) to sneak out of the house that night," the father said about the

taped conversation, which he turned over to police. At least five Scouts were named on the tape.

The father contacted officials with the National Capital Area Council of Boy Scouts of America. The officials, along with the father, early last week contacted police, who questioned his son and four other Scouts.

"They (police investigators) took it (the tape) as evidence," the father said. "Yes, they can use it for evidence because they said I taped them (the conversations) before they (police) talked to me. They said if I had taped it after they talked to me, they would have thrown it out of court."

Detectives wanted to question the Scouts last Friday, but a Scout dinner, which Rankin attended, delayed the questioning until Saturday, he said.

The father said he and members of his family are afraid of Rankin.

His son is still confused about the events of the past two years, the father said. "He (the son) thinks he did it in the name of Scouts. . . . I just don't understand how he (Rankin) wound that boy around his finger. If you'd meet him (the son) and talk to him, you'd see he is smart. I lay awake at night (thinking about it). I just can't understand it."

Despite the turmoil and upheaval of his family's life, the father defended Scouting.

"I am really sorry the church got involved," he said, referring to the incidents of abuse police say occurred at the College Park church where the troop usually met. "And, I'm still supporting the Scouts organization. That is the best organization for a kid to grow up in."

# WITPRO

## Adelphi Scout Leader Faces 3 More Charges in Sexual Abuse Case

By Keith Harrison  
Washington Post Staff Writer

David MacDonald Rankin, an Adelphi Boy Scout leader charged with five counts of child sexual abuse for allegedly having members of his troop perform sex acts with faces three additional sex-related charges, Prince George's County police said yesterday.

Those charges could be thrown out because of the possibility that police obtained evidence against Rankin through illegal telephone recordings, according to legal experts and court sources.

Rankin was expected to be released from the county Correctional Center today, after county officials installed computerized home detention equipment at his home. District Court Judge Graydon S. McKee III lowered Rankin's bond from \$100,000 to \$10,000 on the condition that Rankin agree to the home detention.

Under terms of his release in the year-old detention program, Rankin may leave home only to go to his job in Rockville. Rankin may not have visitors at his home, and corrections officers can visit his house unannounced.

"Your body and soul belongs to the corrections people," McKee told Rankin at a hearing yesterday afternoon.

Law enforcement sources con-

firmed yesterday that the father of one of the alleged victims recorded a telephone conversation between his son and Rankin in which Rankin gave details of the sexual acts committed with the son and at least five other members of Troop 740. The father turned over the tapes to county police last week.

It is illegal under Maryland law to record conversations without the consent of all parties involved, and any such tapes are not allowed as evidence in trials. Legal experts said that the victims' cases against

Rankin could be in jeopardy, depending upon how investigators used the tapes.

Joseph DePaul, Rankin's attorney, said he will bring up the issue at Rankin's next court date. "If what we have is an illegal wiretap," DePaul said, "then it would definitely taint all the evidence gathered in the case."

Legal observers said the taped phone conversations could lead to the suppression of a written statement Rankin gave to investigators.

See SCOUT, C5, Col. 6

## Scout Leader Adelphi Faces 3 More Charges

SCOUT, From C1

in which Rankin, according to court documents, admitted his sexual involvement with the youths.

Police spokesman Robert Law said that the state's attorney's office would have to determine what effect, if any, the tape recordings would have on the case.

"We still have the actual victims," Law said. "Three more [alleged victims] came forward on their own. We didn't discover them through tapes."

Robert Bonsib, the deputy state's attorney for Prince George's, declined to comment about the tape recordings because of the ongoing criminal investigation of Rankin.

Rankin, who scouting officials said has been involved with Boy Scouts of America since his youth, the troop that met weekly at a adjacent to Holy Redeemer Catholic Church in College Park for five years.

The alleged sexual acts, according to court documents, were part of a purported initiation rite into the Order of the Arrow, which Boy Scout leaders described as a service organization and honor society within scouting.

Police said that the alleged sex offenses occurred when no other adults were around the troop. Some of the acts were allegedly committed while Rankin was alone with one of the youths, police said.

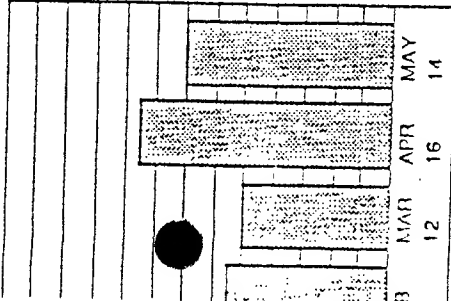
Other times, according to the parent of one of the victims, the acts were committed among a group of youngsters as part of the initiation into what Rankin called the "Rowdies," which was a secret group within the troop. The parent's version was supported by police.

"Rankin said he would break their kneecaps" if they told anyone, said parent, who asked to remain anonymous. "My son was terrified."

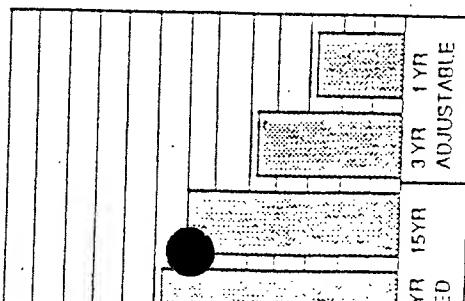
By writer Sari Horowitz  
Contributed to this report.

# Summary

PAGE POINTS



MORTGAGE RATES



## Scouts struggle after leader's arrest

By MIKE FOLKS and LARRY PERL

Journal Staff Writers

### COLLEGE PARK

In the wake of its Scoutmaster's arrest a week ago on charges that he sexually abused some of his Scouts, the condition of the College Park troop he led for five years is in limbo, said a parent who has helped its members and their parents deal with the crisis.

Some parents had talked about pulling their sons out of the troop, he said. But, by the time the Scoutmaster — David MacDonald Rankin, 28, of Adelphi — was released from jail on \$10,000 property bond and placed on home detention Friday, the troop was pulling together and making plans to keep going, the parent said.

The troop, which has had to put off some activities and cancel a camping trip planned for this past weekend, is looking for a new Scoutmaster and a new commitment from parents to play a greater role in troop activities, said the parent, a chairman of the committee of parents that oversees the troop.

After meeting with about 60 parents Thursday night, he described several parents as saying, "If you're going to reorganize, we really support (the troop) and maybe my boy will come back."

At the same time, a county prosecutor said in court Friday that parents of the eight Scouts who police say were abused by Rankin are frightened that he might make good

on threats to harm the Scouts, and one parent has threatened to harm Rankin.

Police added three more sexual abuse charges to the five they filed against Rankin last Monday. Assistant State's Attorney James W. Papirmeister argued that, with the threats and the likelihood that Rankin would flee in the face of the additional charges, his bond should at least be set at \$100,000 in cash, and he asked for \$170,000.

While arguing that he is a danger to the community, Papirmeister called Rankin, who works at a Rockville gun shop, a gun collector who "carries a gun in his car." And, he said, "This defendant has admitted his (sexual) involvement with the victims in writing" and could commit sex abuse while out on bond.

But Rankin's attorney, Joseph DePaul, asked Judge Gerald Devlin to let stand the \$10,000 property bond and home detention set the day before by another judge.

"We do not believe there's any danger of any kind to the public," DePaul said. "We do not believe Mr. Rankin will leave the jurisdiction."

DePaul said that, in most child sexual abuse cases in which the suspect has no criminal record, the suspect is usually released on personal recognizance.

As police have said, Papirmeister described the alleged sexual abuse incidents as "initiation rites" necessary for admission to a special group of Scouts chosen by Rankin.

"It was necessary under the direc-

tion of Mr. Rankin to perform various sex acts" to become members, Papirmeister said. "Mr. Rankin threatened the individuals with harm if they told anyone."

Saying the episode has "scarred eight individuals for the rest of their lives," Papirmeister asked that the court file on the case be sealed, explaining, "mothers (of Scouts in the troop) are calling and saying their children are being subjected to harassment in terms of these charges."

Closing the files is needed because the "victims' reputations and standings in the community have been jeopardized," he said.

On the issue of sealing the court file, DePaul said such a step should have been taken by the state at the time of the arrest. He argued against such a move.

Judge Devlin let the previous bond stand and refused to seal the court file. He also refused to hear arguments on an issue that the defense has raised as a possible challenge to the charges against Rankin: a tape a parent of one of the alleged victims said he secretly made of telephone

conversations between his son and Rankin, and between his son and another Scout also said to have been abused.

The father has said that the tape contains names, dates and locations of alleged sexual liaisons Rankin had with the Scouts. The father said he has turned the tape over to police and it helped them identify four of the Scouts Rankin has been charged with abusing. Police have declined to confirm whether they have the tape.

In court, citing a newspaper article in which the father described the taping, DePaul tried to question the legality of such recordings. Under state law, all parties must consent before a telephone conversation legally can be taped. DePaul has said that the tape could not, therefore, be used in court. The state's attorney's office has declined to comment on that issue.

"The evidence in the main (against Rankin) came as a result of an illegal wiretap," DePaul said of the tape. "The evidence against this man (Rankin) should be questioned."

## WE'RE MAKING CAR LOANS THAT HANDLE LIKE A DREAM.

If you think Maryland Federal Savings & Loan Association is only known for its affordable home loans, then it's time you heard about our automotive loans, for new and used cars. We've got some of the best auto loan rates in the whole nation.

## Chief uncertain about jobs

March 23 and fit  
asses four hours  
t week, in a \$1.6 million  
company's second consecutive quar-  
ter of profitability and means the  
company has made a profit in three

contract ratified by UAW  
a week ago in Hagerstown, Al-  
lertown and Somerset, N.J.,  
loyers